tude 22° to latitude 19° S. Presumably, they were in this general area when first discovered by the Spaniards. The Guaná at that time consisted of the following subdivisions: Layaná, Niguecactemic, Tereno, Echoaladi, and the Kinikinao (Métraux, 1946, vol. 1, pp. 239–240). Estimates of the total Guaná population vary. At the end of the eighteenth century Aguirre and Azara gave the total Guaná population as 8,200. The Mbayá also claimed this part of the Chaco as their home but, owing to their nomadic habits, ranged over a wider territory stretching all the way from the present site of Asunción to where Corumbá now stands. Labrador estimated the Mbayá as numbering between 7,000 and 8,000. During this period the Mbayá were composed of the following subdivisions: Cadiquegodí (Caduveo), Guetiadegodí, Apacachodegodegí, Lichagotegodí, Eyibogodegí, Gotocogegodegí, and Beutuebo (ibid., vol. 1, pp. 217–218).

Early writers, imbued with medieval conceptions of political status, claimed to see in this interdependence a relationship of lord and serf after the European pattern. This view on the basis of their own evidence appears exaggerated. A thoroughgoing system of social stratification based on cultural differences usually implies some degree of political unity and marked distinctions in status and social functions. The Mbayá never achieved political unity as a tribe nor did they exercise organized authority over the Guaná as a whole. To the end of the Mbayá remained organized on a "band" basis. The Guaná always had their own lands and villages, their own social organization and chiefs. The fact that the Mbayá chiefs married Guaná women of rank seems to imply a degree of equality between the chiefly classes of the two peoples.

Through intermarriage Mbayá chiefs are said to have become chiefs of Guaná settlements. Just how this political domination was achieved is not made clear. It is stated that the Guaná had female chiefs and that marriage with a Mbayá chief gave him rights over his wife's people. There is some doubt that the Guaná had female chiefs—the Terena, for instance, stoutly deny this. Even if this were true, it is not clear how a female chief's husband could usurp his wife's position in a tribe where female chieftainship was a culturally defined rule. When we learn that the

[P. 2-A]

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/Information on the "slave" or "vassal" relationship of the Guana to the Mbaya people will be found in category 648./

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Florestan Fernandes, 1952:248-272; in his footnotes, this author provides a selected bibliography.

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175 Sanches Labrador, then, tries to explain the causes of this
648 subjection: /31/ "...the Guaycurus have, on both banks of the
M Paraguay River, servants or people who pay tribute, who have
[651] been making them small offerings for some time. In so far as I was able to inquire about the origin of their right over the Niyololas, as they call the whole nation, it is all based on
G kinship, without their having obtained this power through arms
[582] or conquest...." (31) And elsewhere he writes: "Some
[562]
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31. 1910, II:266.

Eyguayeguis (a Mbayá-Guaikurú subtribe--RCO) caciques or
G captains married according to their fashion Guaná women
[566] caciques or captains. The latter's vassals, when these women died, remained in a permanent feudal relation to the descendants of their mistresses' husbands." (32)

32. Idem., I:267.

Let it be added further that this vassalage was owed to a few Guaikurú and not to the entire group, as might appear at first glance. The chronicler thus says: "It so happened that the Eyiguayeguis caciques who married the Niyolola women caciques or captains, held their wives' vassals as their own; since then they have regarded them as such."(33) And be it

33. Labrador, II:266-267.

said in passing that it is not made very clear whether these vassals were actually Guaná--and in this case differentiated from